ABSTRACT

RAPID IMPROVEMENT IN MAJOR DEPRESSION AFTER LOW SUBCUTANEOUS DOSES OF MIF-1 Rudolph H. Ehrensing, M.D.[1], Abba J. Kastin, M.D.[2], Gayle F. Wurzlow, M.D.[1], Gary F. Michell, M.S.[1], and Andrew H. Mebane, M.D.[1] ([1]Department of Psychiatry, Ochsner Medical Institutions, New Orleans, LA 70121 [2]VA Medical Center and Tulane University School of Medicine, New Orleans, LA 70146)

In this double blind pilot study, 20 significantly depressed patients who all met the DSM-III R criteria for major depression were given a single subcutaneous injection of either 10 mg MIF-1 (Pro-Leu-Gly-NH_2) or placebo on each of 5 consecutive days. Responses were evaluated by the Hamilton Depression Rating Scale; the Montgomery and Asberg Depression Rating Scale, the Carroll Self Rating Scale for Depression, the Zung Self Rating Scale for Depression and the 100 mm Line Self Rating Scale. Treatments were reversed for a second week of 5 consecutive daily injections. At the end of the first week, the group receiving MIF-1 was significantly improved as compared to the placebo group on all rating scales. Eight out of 9 patients receiving MIF-1 showed marked improvement (score < 10 on the Hamilton Scale) as compared with only 2 of 11 patients receiving saline ($p < .01$). The improvement persisted throughout a second week during which the patients receiving MIF-1 for the first week now received placebo. Administration of MIF-1 during the second week to the remaining patients, who had received placebo during the first week, resulted in substantial improvement so that by the end of the second week, the groups were indistinguishable. Over half the improved patients remained in remission with no further anti-depressant treatment for periods over 6 months. No adverse effects were observed.